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that I would willingly have accepted, if Pansa had only urged me. There were several of these lamps around. They were on tall graceful bronze stands, with solid triple foundations, which yet did not seem to take up much room. On top of the stand was a graceful "foolish virgin" lamp a thing of beauty, and a joy forever.

Our host carried us swiftly through the art room, and the conversation room, which he informed us answered to the drawing-room of modern times, and then we filed into the dining-room.

At first glance it looked pathetically unlike a place for a real hearty meal. A semi-circular couch ran around a small polished table. The couch sloped upwards towards the table, and I fell to wondering how on earth the food was to be obtained. I pictured the guests sitting cross-legged on the top of the slope, and felt sure that most of us would take a sudden slide down to the bottom, just at the moment when we had a choice morsel poised to eat. I realized that this method would make us sit with our backs to each other, and did not think it sociable—but then every country has its own customs.

With a smile, and a wave of the hand, our host threw himself gracefully, full length upon the couch, and pulling a pillow under his arm, rested easily on his elbow, and signed to us to follow his example. We all did the best we could, and found ourselves with our heads in a bunch round the centre table, ready to talk or eat. Over the table hung a very large silver hoop, and suspended from this hoop, were chaplets of flowers, one for each guest, and with each chaplet a gift.

From the kitchen, which was right next to the dining-room, the slaves brought forth the viands. Our host stated it would be our duty to cut off what portion we fancied, with our daggers, and eat it in our fingers. It was something of a relief to us, to find that this was only going to be a play meal, and that going through the motions, was all that was expected of us.

A slave laid a chaplet of roses on my brow, another handed me the viand, roast peacock I believe, and in a moment another slave came round, with a bowl of scented water, to wash my fingers off before the next course.

Then appeared one of those beautiful boys one reads about in Bulwer, carrying an amphora, or wine jar.

Such a jar! The sourest of "p'tit bleu" would have tasted excellent from it. The long sweeping curve from spout to base, was an artist's dream!

Dinner over we wandered through the kitchen, and here even, the lavish decoration was not wanting, while the dining-room was rich in fruits and flowers, and the perspective paintings of cupboards and so forth, of which the Pompeiians seemed so fond, the kitchen had a large painting in homage of the god Lares, under whose especial care they placed their provisions. It seemed like a note of a familiar song. The Pansas in their day, had suffered from indifferent cooks, and had placed this painting on their kitchen wall, with the double purpose of appeasing the god, and impressing the cook with the sacredness of his duty.

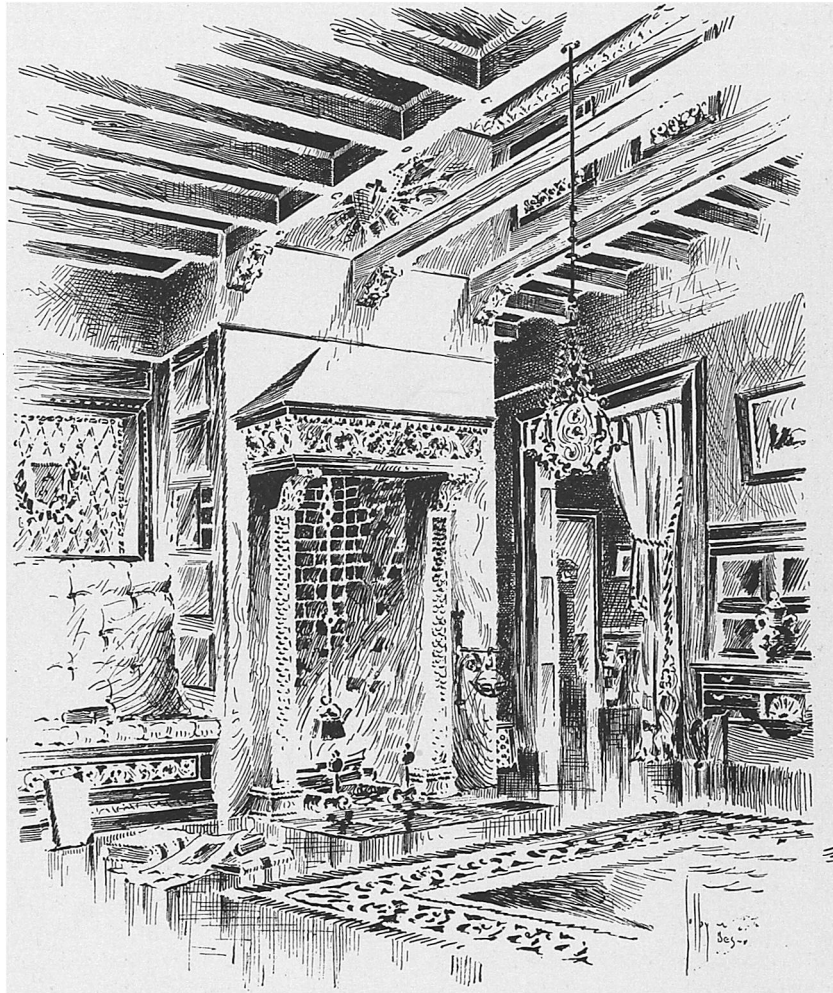
I lingered in the kitchen, admiring the practical common sense that had arranged for it right between the winter dining-room, which we had been using, and another for summer, trellis-covered, with walls painted in flowers and birds.

The cooking was done with charcoal, the food was roasted on spits, laid across the embrasures of stone. Leaves of bread, eggs, nuts, and various articles of food lay about, looking so modern and homelike, that it was hard to believe that I was at Pansa's, thousands of years ago, and not in my own house.

From the summer dining-room, we wandered into the garden. Even here the love for decoration was displayed. Here were no blank walls for snails to glide over, decorated just as beautifully, if a little more fantastically, than those within, the walls carried you

from the real garden into the blissful gardens of the gods.

Then, regretfully, we made our way back to the door, and bade our host good-bye, and passed back into the outer world, feeling as if an enchanter's wand had wafted us to story land, for a few brief hours.



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